GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

HANDBOOK FOR SOCIAL WORK MAJORS (BSW PROGRAM)
2016-2017

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The Department of Social Work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) at the Baccalaureate and Master’s levels.
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I. OVERVIEW OF THE BSW PROGRAM

Welcome to the BSW Program!

The mission of the BSW program is to prepare entry-level generalist social work professionals who will demonstrate ethical leadership in innovative multidisciplinary practice, social reform, and research in diverse communities. Students are provided a range of opportunities to develop a broad knowledge and skills base consistent with the systems and strengths perspectives. They are expected to practice using core social work values and to examine and resolve ethical dilemmas. Classroom and field experiences prepare students to be competent in the use of new technologies and in culturally sensitive, generalist social work practice. Over the years, our students have become successful social workers, administrators, advocates, lawyers, clergy, and educators. All have left our program prepared to face the world of work and/or further academic success. This BSW Student Handbook serves as a resource to help make the undergraduate social work education a successful journey. It is the student’s responsibility to read through this BSW Student Handbook carefully, and be familiar with and abide by all BSW program policies.

Department of Social Work Mission

The mission of the Department of Social Work at George Mason University is to promote human well-being by ensuring economic and social justice, as well as human rights for all. We work to meet these goals:

1. By providing an academically rigorous education that develops social work leaders and practitioners who engage in critical thinking. We seek to develop effective social work leaders, scholars, and practitioners who both challenge injustice and institute interventions grounded in theory and science. With a campus located in an area of enormous cultural plurality, we seek to train leaders, practitioners, and scholars equipped to serve diverse populations.

2. Conducting applied social science research that aims to solve personal and social problems, and investigates systemic inequities in power and unequal access to resources. We seek to identify and develop effective interventions based on scientific theory.

3. Engaging in public service that cultivates community partnerships, enhances capacity, and provides technical expertise to human service organizations caring for diverse local, national, and global communities.

We build upon a foundation of generalist social work knowledge and skills that emphasizes empowerment, inclusion, and systems transformation.

College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) Vision and Mission

The College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) is the "health college" of George Mason University. It is where health research meets health practice and service delivery. By integrating our educational programs, our clinical and community-based research, and our community engagement efforts, CHHS strives to provide a rigorous and innovative learning experience for our students, to be a major provider of the health care workforce in northern Virginia, and to produce new knowledge to address critical health and social issues in policy and practice, while
both faculty and students are actively engaged in improving the health and well-being of people
both locally and globally. The mission of CHHS is:

- To use our knowledge and skills to educate students, both undergraduate and graduate,
  so they are qualified to become health and human service professionals;
- To discover new knowledge through research; and
- To provide direct health and social services for community residents.

**History of the Department of Social Work**

The BSW Program was established in the early 1970s as part of the Department of Sociology in
the College of Arts and Sciences. In 1985, the Department of Social Work moved to the College
of Professional Studies, which, with the addition of the Social Work Program, became the
College of Education and Human Services, housing the Departments of Education, Health and
Physical Education, and Social Work. The Department of Social Work and the Department of
Health, Sport and Leisure Studies (formerly the Department of Health and Physical Education)
organized into the Department of Human Services in 1991. Through a large endowment to the
Social Work Program received in 1992, the Child Welfare Center was approved and began
operation in the fall of 1993 with the appointment of the Elisabeth Shirley Enochs Endowed
Chair in Child Welfare. The Endowed Chair position remains but the Department of Social Work
no longer houses the Child Welfare Center. In 1997, the Department of Social Work became
part of New Century College, and in 2000, all programs in New Century College became part of
the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). In 2002, the department added an MSW and now
offers full and part-time education, Advanced Standing, and specializations in Social Change
and Clinical Practice. In 2006, the Department of Social Work became part of the newly formed
College of Health and Human Services. Currently, the Department of Social Work is comprised
of approximately 17 full-time faculty, 200 BSW students, and 150 MSW students. Our Field
Education Program works with more than 200 agencies in Northern Virginia, Maryland, and the
District of Columbia that serve as field placement and service-learning sites for our students.

**Program Information**

The Department of Social Work is located off of the Fairfax Campus (about 1.5 miles from
campus) at 10340 Democracy Lane, Suite 300, Fairfax, VA 22030). The mailing address is:
4400 University Drive, MS 1F8, Fairfax, Virginia 22030.

There are a suite of offices located on the Fairfax campus that are available to social work
faculty and students during designated faculty hours. Please contact the individual faculty to
inquire about availability to meet at this location (Robinson Hall B, Room 475).

**Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Program Accreditation**

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is a nonprofit national association representing
more than 2,500 individual members, as well as graduate and undergraduate programs of
professional social work education. Founded in 1952, this partnership of educational and
professional institutions, social welfare agencies, and private citizens is recognized by the
Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work
education in this country. Both the BSW and MSW Programs at George Mason University are
accredited through CSWE. Any questions regarding accreditation should be directed to the
Department Chair.
CSWE Social Work Generalist Competencies and Practice Behaviors

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession’s history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
- Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
- Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
- Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes
- Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels
- Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences
- Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice

Social workers understand that every person regardless of position in society has fundamental human rights such as freedom, safety, privacy, an adequate standard of living, health care, and education. Social workers understand the global interconnections of oppression and human rights violations, and are knowledgeable about theories of human need and social justice and strategies to promote social and economic justice and human rights. Social workers understand strategies designed to eliminate oppressive structural barriers to ensure that social goods, rights, and responsibilities are distributed equitably and that civil, political, environmental, economic, social, and cultural human rights are protected. Social workers:

- Apply their understanding of social, economic, and environmental justice to advocate for human rights at the individual and system levels
- Engage in practices that advance social, economic, and environmental justice

4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:

- Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research
- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings
- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery

5. Engage in Policy Practice

Social workers understand that human rights and social justice, as well as social welfare and services, are mediated by policy and its implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. Social workers understand the history and current structures of social policies and services, the role of policy in service delivery, and the role of practice in policy development. Social workers understand their role in policy development and implementation within their practice settings at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels and they actively engage in policy practice to effect change within those settings. Social workers recognize and understand the historical, social, cultural, economic, organizational, environmental, and global influences that affect social policy. They are also knowledgeable about policy formulation, analysis, implementation, and evaluation. Social workers:

- Identify social policy at the local, state, and federal level that impacts well-being, service delivery, and access to social services
- Assess how social welfare and economic policies impact the delivery of and access to social services
- Apply critical thinking to analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance human rights and social, economic, and environmental justice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:

- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies
- Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies

7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that assessment is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in the assessment of diverse clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand methods of assessment with diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers recognize the implications of the larger practice context in the assessment process and value the importance of inter-professional collaboration in this process. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may affect their assessment and decision-making. Social workers:

- Collect and organize data, and apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the analysis of assessment data from clients and constituencies
- Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs, and challenges within clients and constituencies
- Select appropriate intervention strategies based on the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of inter-professional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies
- Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes
- Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies
- Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals

9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Social workers understand that evaluation is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities. Social workers recognize the importance of evaluating processes and outcomes to advance practice, policy, and service delivery effectiveness. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in evaluating outcomes. Social workers understand qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluating outcomes and practice effectiveness. Social workers:

- Select and use appropriate methods for evaluation of outcomes
- Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in the evaluation of outcome
- Critically analyze, monitor, and evaluate intervention and program processes and outcomes
- Apply evaluation findings to improve practice effectiveness at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels

Full document can be found at http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=81660
**Program Assessment**

The Department of Social Work is continually evaluating the BSW Program in order to make it the best program possible. As students, you will be asked to participate in this evaluation process through a series of program assessments. Examples might include standardized tests, interviews, self-assessments, exit interviews, and alumni surveys. The resulting data will be aggregated and used by the faculty, the Program Advisory Committee, and the Field Advisory Committee to evaluate the Program’s strengths and challenges on a regular basis. We appreciate your cooperation. All graduating students are assessed for competency using an integrative case study interview assessment. Graduating students will be expected to be able to demonstrate the CSWE competencies listed above through this integrative interview exercise.

**Student Representatives on Departmental Committees**

The Department of Social Work has two external committees – the Program Advisory Committee and the Field Advisory Committee – that act as a link between the department and area human service agencies. Both committees include faculty and student representatives, in addition to community practitioners. These committees provide guidance to the Department related to curriculum development and field education, and assist with program assessment and community relations. They meet several times throughout the year. Each has a BSW student representative, appointed by the faculty. Other opportunities to serve on committees may arise, so be sure to read the email you receive from the Department.
II. OVERVIEW OF BSW CURRICULUM

Generalist Practice

The BSW Program at George Mason University prepares students to enter the field of social work in generalist practice. Generalist practice involves a mastery and conceptual understanding of an ecological model of the interactions of individuals (micro), family and groups (mezzo), and communities, organizations and society (macro); competency in the use of interviewing, assessment, and intervention skills in promoting social change and empowering clients; and restoring, maintaining, and enhancing social functioning. Social work students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) professional code of ethics including delivery of appropriate services and responsiveness to diverse population groups.

BSW Program Goals

1. To prepare students for entry level, generalist social work practice with individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations.
2. To provide students with a foundation in liberal arts and social work knowledge, values, and skills that will enable them to pursue graduate work and lifelong learning.
3. To provide opportunities for students to develop proficiency in collaborative practice, effective leadership, advocacy, innovation, research, and technology.
4. To expose students to the complexities of human diversity and the range of intervention skills and strategies needed for effective practice.
5. To sensitize students to the dynamics of oppression and discrimination and to involve them in change efforts aimed at achieving social justice.
6. To encourage students to identify with the social work profession, to utilize supervision appropriately, and to appreciate the profession’s history and mission.
7. To promote adherence to the ethical standards of the profession with client systems, agency personnel, and colleagues.

Academic Advising

Every student with 60 or more credits in the BSW Program is assigned a faculty academic advisor according to the student’s last name. Please see the website for specific assignments. To request a change of advisor, please submit the “Request for a Change of Advisor” form signed by both the previous advisor and the new advisor. Students should consult with their advisor before registering for classes each semester. The advisor can also assist a student with interpretation of departmental or University policies and help ensure that a student is on track for graduation. Finally, your advisor is a wealth of knowledge about the social work profession, so feel free to share your thoughts and concerns about the program, your interests, and your career goals.

Individual Requirements for the BSW Program

- Commitment to working with people (including fellow students, clients, co-workers, faculty, and supervisors) and be able to assume a variety of tasks and responsibilities.
- Ability and willingness to make adjustments between your personal and professional life.
Social work as a profession is not necessarily a 9-to-5 job, as people’s problems are unpredictable and may not occur during normal working hours.

- Ability to examine and understand your own biases and remain open to working with a variety of people and situations that may challenge these biases.
- Ability to handle criticism and use it for self-improvement; ability to be self-critical, open to change, adaptable, and flexible.
- Commitment to learning. The major requirements and course work are demanding, and each student is expected to keep current with all course requirements.

Despite the demands, the work is rewarding. The opportunity to work directly with clients in your junior service learning experience and the senior field practicum allows you to experience some of the work that is involved in a social work career. These experiences in the field should be looked upon as an opportunity to closely examine whether this profession meets both your personal and career expectations. If you have any reservations or doubts about your future as a social worker, these questions may help you decide whether social work is the appropriate career choice for you.

**Is Social Work the Right Major for You?**

- Do you find it difficult to participate in or lead class discussions?
- Do you find yourself incompatible with fellow social work students? (These will be your colleagues after you graduate.)
- Do you find it difficult to talk in front of a group?
- Do you have difficulty meeting deadlines or time constraints?
- Do you tend to procrastinate and not take your work seriously?
- Do you have strong personal biases about certain ethnic groups, personal or religious beliefs, or certain populations?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you should discuss with your advisor your readiness to enter the social work field at this time.

**General University Requirements**

All Mason requirements are outlined in the University Catalog, which can be accessed online at [http://catalog.gmu.edu](http://catalog.gmu.edu). Forty-five credit hours of 300-level or above courses must be completed to graduate. Note: Required 300 and 400-level social work classes meet this requirement of 45 upper level credits. Students must have a total of 120 credits to graduate from the university. The BSW Program does not give college credit for previous work or life experiences.

ENGH 302 is required for all Mason students. Social Work students should register for the Social Sciences (SS) section. A student may test out of the course by submitting written papers to the English Department. Students wishing to test out of ENGH 302 should request the paperwork from the English Department, which cites the specific requirements for petitioning and exemption from ENGH 302. These will be reviewed for grammar, punctuation, and content by the English Department.

If a student is unfamiliar with the American Psychological Association’s (APA) style and formatting of writing, ENGH 302 is a necessity, and students should take this course as early as possible. All written work for social work classes should use the style and format specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition) unless otherwise
specified by your instructor. The library and the bookstore have the *APA Manual of Style* (6th edition). This book is required for the BSW program.

**Transfer Credits**

Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) and George Mason University have agreed to specific transfer of credits for those students who have successfully completed coursework at NVCC. All academic counselors/advisors at NVCC have access to the social work transfer sheet which outlines the liberal arts courses that will transfer directly to George Mason University and will fulfill the liberal arts requirements for a major in social work. Transfer credits from other colleges and universities are evaluated for acceptance by the Registrar’s Office when a student is admitted to Mason.

Students may request that prior coursework be reviewed for potential credit beyond what is received in the initial transfer credit evaluation. The Transfer Credit Re-Evaluation Appeal form is available at [http://admissions.gmu.edu/documents/transferCreditReEvalAppealForm.pdf](http://admissions.gmu.edu/documents/transferCreditReEvalAppealForm.pdf). Complete the form, attach the catalog course description and syllabus to the form, and submit it to the corresponding Mason department to request a review. The faculty of that department will determine whether credit can be given for the course in question.

If a student feels that a social work course taken at another accredited undergraduate social work program meets the course requirements for one of the social work courses at Mason, the student may follow the same procedure and present the syllabus to the BSW Program Director for review. Every effort will be made to grant credit for course material already successfully completed. Field practicum credits may transfer as general electives, but are not accepted by the Mason’s BSW program in lieu of field practicum requirements at Mason. The social work faculty will make a final decision about the appropriate content and level of a transfer social work course.

**Prerequisites**

Students should focus on completing all of the Mason Core requirements which provide students with a strong liberal arts foundation before beginning their Social Work classes. BSW students are required to take these specific courses as prerequisites:

- Biology (BIOL) 103
- Sociology (SOCL) 101
- Psychology (PSYC) 100
- Social Work (SOCW) 200
- English (ENGH) 302 (Social Sciences) – must be taken before SOCW 471
- Statistics: SOCW 390, STAT 250, SOCI 313, or PSYC 300 – must be taken before SOCW 471

**Course Sequencing**

Since several of the Social Work courses are taught in sequence to one another, it is very important for you to understand the nature of the sequencing and to be sure that you register for courses in the proper order. Some courses are taught only in the fall semester. Other courses are taught only during the spring semester. You need to meet with your advisor to ensure that
you have the appropriate course sequence and that you will meet all requirements by the
deadlines. Non-adherence to recommended courses of study may delay the start of your senior
field practicum. Please see course titles and prerequisites below. An advising worksheet with
the recommended order of courses is provided in Appendix A.

**Note: ALL 200 and 300-level Social Work courses must be completed before beginning
the Senior Field Practicum.**

Courses taught in **Fall only:**

- SOCW 357
- SOCW 361
- SOCW 452
- SOCW 453
- SOCW 471

Courses taught in **Spring only:**

- SOCW 358
- SOCW 362
- SOCW 390
- SOCW 454
- SOCW 456
- SOCW 472

Courses taught in **Fall and Spring** semesters:

- SOCW 200
- SOCW 311
- SOCW 312
- SOCW 375
- SOCW 380

**Summer Classes**

A limited number of social work courses are taught in the summer. Course offerings change
each summer so students should check the summer school class schedule when it becomes
available.
### Required Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits and Prerequisites</th>
<th>When to Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 200</td>
<td>Introduction to Social Work</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Freshman, sophomore, or first semester of junior year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No prerequisite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 311</td>
<td>Building Professional Social Work Skills</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Fall, junior year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 312</td>
<td>Knowledge Building for Helping Professionals</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Spring, junior year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 357</td>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Fall, junior year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200, SOCI 101, and PSYC 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 361</td>
<td>Lab: Methods of Social Work Intervention</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
<td>Fall, junior year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 358</td>
<td>Methods of Social Work Intervention II</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Spring, junior year</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 357 and SOCW 361</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 362</td>
<td>Lab: Methods of Social Work Intervention II</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
<td>Spring, junior year</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200, SOCW 357 and SOCW 361</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 375</td>
<td>Human Behavior and the Family Life Course</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Fall or spring, junior year</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200, BIOL 103, PSYC 100, and SOCI 101</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 380</td>
<td>Changing Social Policies and Systems</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Fall or spring, junior year</td>
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<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 390</td>
<td>Analytic Methods for Social Work Research</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Spring, junior year</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 452</td>
<td>Senior Seminar I</td>
<td>2 credits</td>
<td>Fall, senior year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200, 311, 312, 357, 361, 358, 362, 375,</td>
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<td>380 and recommendation of faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 453</td>
<td>Senior Practicum I</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td>Fall, senior year</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Prerequisites: SOCW 200, 311, 312, 357, 361, 358, 362, 375,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>380 and recommendation of faculty</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Number</td>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Credits and Prerequisites</td>
<td>When to Complete</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 471</td>
<td>Research in Social Work</td>
<td>3 credits&lt;br&gt;Prerequisites: SOCW 200; SOCW 312; ENGH 302; Corequisites: SOCW 452; SOCW 453; Statistics (SOCW 390, STAT 250, SOCI 313, PSYC 300)</td>
<td>Fall, senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 454</td>
<td>Senior Seminar II</td>
<td>2 credits&lt;br&gt;Prerequisites: SOCW 452, 453, 471</td>
<td>Spring, senior year Take with SOCW 456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 456</td>
<td>Senior Practicum II</td>
<td>3 credits&lt;br&gt;Prerequisites: SOCW 452, 453, 471</td>
<td>Spring, senior year Take with SOCW 454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 472 RS</td>
<td>Integrative Methods in Social Action and Social Change</td>
<td>3 credits&lt;br&gt;Prerequisites: SOCW 452, SOCW 453, and SOCW 471</td>
<td>Spring, senior year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 400-level courses</td>
<td>Social Work Electives (e.g., SOCW 400, 415, 435, 445, 475, 483)</td>
<td>6 credits (2 courses) are required</td>
<td>Each semester, 2-3 Social Work electives are offered on a rotating basis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Synthesis Course**

The University requires that all students successfully complete a University approved synthesis course. SOCW 375 (Human Behavior and the Family Life Course) has been designated a synthesis course and can be taken by students in any major.
III. ADMISSION TO MAJOR

Students interested in the social work field usually declare social work as a major when applying to the university, but declaring social work as a major does not automatically admit the student to the Social Work BSW Program. Students must be admitted to the major before being considered for senior field placement. The application to major is combined with the application for the senior field practicum and is typically due at the end of January (before the fall of the senior year).

- In order to be admitted to the social work program, students must:
  a. Have completed at least 45 credits with a cumulative GPA of 2.50 or higher;
  b. Have completed or be registered in BIOL 103, ENGH 101, SOCI 101, and PSYC 100;
  c. Earned at least a C in SOCW 200, SOCW 357, SOCW 361, and at least two of the following courses (SOCW 311, SOCW 312, SOCW 375, SOCW 380, SOCW 390); and
  d. be enrolled in all other required 300-level SOCW courses

- Students must be admitted to the major AND must complete all 300-level SOCW courses before beginning the senior field practicum. Students who do not complete all of the required SOCW courses with a C or better, will not be placed in the senior field practicum.

Students who do not have a 2.50 cumulative GPA at the time of application will have their application returned and are advised to reapply when the required GPA is attained. Students who have difficulty achieving a 2.50 GPA for admittance to the social work major should consider getting special tutoring or re-evaluate their decision to major in social work. Students should see their advisor to discuss academic plans. Students who have difficulty maintaining a 2.50 GPA once admitted to the major should see their advisor for academic support.

Although some students may be conditionally admitted to the major, the admission decision is contingent upon maintaining or achieving a 2.50 GPA by the end of the semester. Students not meeting this and all other requirements will not be admitted to major. There is no admission to major in the summer. Students who are unable to meet the required GPA of 2.50 for admission to major, but who are within the range of 2.40-2.49 and have completed all other requirements to be admitted to major, may be allowed to take courses during the first summer session only (Session A) in an effort to acquire the required GPA for admission of 2.50 and continuance into senior year. Students must provide two copies of written notification of their above intent: one copy to the BSW Program Director and one copy to their advisor.

The student's application for Admission to the Social Work Major will be reviewed by social work faculty members who will then recommend the action to be taken. The decision is based on the quality of academic and field performance as well as on personal performance for the profession of social work. The faculty may require a personal interview before a decision is made. The BSW faculty will evaluate student performance periodically.

Each student receives a letter informing him or her of the decision that has been reached. Questions should be brought to the attention of the BSW Program Director. A student may appeal a decision by submitting a written statement of appeal to the BSW Program Director. The appeal must be submitted within seven (7) working days of receipt of the denial of admission.
IV. SERVICE LEARNING AND FIELD EDUCATION

All social work students are given the opportunity to integrate classroom knowledge with hands-on experience in agency settings. In the interest of attaining a social work degree, students should seek a variety of field experiences when considering placements. Both the junior service-learning experience (in SOCW 311) and the senior field practicum experience are rewarding, yet demanding. The requirements of the senior field practicum, in particular, create challenges for those with full-time employment and/or other commitments. Field placements require a schedule that may not conform to academic holidays. If a student is employed (or has been employed) in a social service setting, has done volunteer work at an agency, has been a client at a social service agency, or has another relationship with staff at the agency that may present a conflict of interest, that particular agency or organization cannot be used as a junior service-learning experience or senior field practicum site.

Students will need a professional and polished version of their resume by the time of application to the Senior Field Practicum. University Career Services has several resources to assist with creating a resume, preparing for interviews, and other career advice:
http://careers.gmu.edu/resources/.

Junior Service-Learning Experience

All Social Work majors are required to take SOCW 311, Building Professional Social Work Skills, which has as a course requirement a minimum of 40 hours of service-learning experience (3 credits). The service-learning experience will allow the student to gain exposure to a human services setting with the purpose of improving interpersonal and communication skills within a social work framework.

Senior Field Practicum

Students must complete the combined Admission to Major and Senior Field Practicum Application. Students who are eligible to apply will be notified by email at the end of the fall semester or beginning of the spring semester. This application determines student readiness for field work and explores various senior practicum options based on previous field and life experiences. Please refer to the Field Education Manual available on the Department website (http://chhs.gmu.edu/socialwork/students/upload/field-education-manual.pdf) for more detailed information about the Senior Field Practicum.

SOCW 452 and 454 - 2 semesters, 4 credits total
Students participate in a senior seminar once a week with their field liaison who facilitates the integration of classroom teaching and field practicum experience.

SOCW 453 and 456 - 2 semesters, 6 credits total
Working a minimum of 16 hours per week in a community agency. Learning is provided through supervision on site with a designated field instructor, active participation in service delivery and/or administration, and interaction with client systems.
Knowledge of University Policies

Each student is responsible for knowing Mason’s rules, regulations, requirements, and academic policies. This catalog is the normal repository of policy statements, but corrections, changes, or interpretations can be promulgated by other means, including electronic publication.

When the university or one of its academic units changes course requirements, grading procedures, or criteria for acceptance into particular programs, academic standing, or graduation, the changes apply to all students enrolled at the time of implementation of the change and thereafter.

Students have certain choices regarding the set of degree requirements under which they graduate, as detailed in the Catalog Requirements for Degrees section of this catalog. The Special Collections and Archives section of the Fenwick Library has copies of all previous catalogs. They may not be checked out, but may be photocopied. Any student in doubt about an academic matter should consult a faculty advisor or dean.

Students are subject to the university’s stated policies regarding patents and copyrights. These policies are available at www.gmu.edu/research/OSP/Policies.html.

Official Communication with Students

Web: mail.gmu.edu

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. Students are also expected to maintain an active and accurate mailing address in order to receive communications sent through the United States Postal Service.

All communication from the University, the Fairfax campus, and the Department of Social Work will be directed to the George Mason University email address only. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. Information regarding how to access your email and Blackboard can be found at http://www.gmu.edu/resources/students/.

All students are also expected to keep the Department of Social Work informed of their current phone number and mailing address. Every student is expected to check their Mason email account daily when school is in session, and weekly during vacations. The Department of Social Work will not keep track of students’ personal email addresses.
Academic Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact Disability Services (DS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through DS (http://ds.gmu.edu).

Academic Integrity and the Honor Code

George Mason University shares in the tradition of an honor system that has existed in Virginia since 1842. The Honor Code is an integral part of university life. From the Academic Integrity website:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, trust, and fairness among all members of the Mason community, and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code:

**Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**

Mason’s Commitment: To create an environment that is innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial, and accessible—helping you avoid accidental or intentional violations of the Honor Code.

What does Mason mean when it uses the term academic integrity?

According to Webster’s dictionary, integrity is an “adherence to ethical principles.” A person who has integrity practices honesty in all things and does what is “right” even if it flies in the face of what is commonly accepted by their peers. Academic integrity refers specifically to those actions and intentions associated with your work at George Mason University.

Your commitment to not “cheat, steal, plagiarize, or lie in matters related to your academic work” is of great importance to the Mason community. Students who lack integrity devalue our degrees and harm Mason’s reputation, which can have a direct negative impact on you in your attempts to begin a career after graduation.

Please see the Office of Academic Integrity’s website (http://oai.gmu.edu) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process.

Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from Social Work Classes

Each semester’s Schedule of Classes includes a calendar that specifies the deadlines for adding and dropping courses, and withdrawing from the University. Typically, the deadline for adding and dropping a course (without tuition penalty) is 7 days after the start of each semester. Please check the Registrar’s website for specific deadlines. To drop or add a course during this timeframe, access your schedule via the Mason Patriot Web system. Students must be officially registered for a course in order to receive credit. Likewise, a course will remain on the student’s official transcript unless the course is dropped within the university timelines. Withdrawal from a
course after the deadline – or withdrawal from the entire semester – may be granted by the Department Chair and the Dean’s Office only for non-academic reasons. Your faculty advisor can assist you with this process.

**Audiorecording in Classes**

Out of courtesy and respect to your classmates and your professors, please ask for permission before recording lectures or discussions. At times, discussions in social work classes may cover sensitive material, and students and professors have the right to know if they are being recorded. Please discuss any concerns you have with your professor.

**Class Attendance**

Class attendance in the Social Work Program is required. Social work education depends heavily on the processing of information, interactions with others, and the application and practice of professional skills. Students who miss class will miss crucial opportunities that cannot be compensated for by copying a classmate’s notes or reading the book. Common courtesy suggests that students who must miss or be tardy to a class notify their instructors ahead of time. It is the responsibility of the student to find out what he or she missed when absent, and to make up any outstanding class work. In the BSW Program, students can be penalized for unexcused absences.

**Conflict of Interest Policy**

The intent of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to ensure students the most objective learning environment, including evaluation of student performance in the practicum setting. Students are required to sign a conflict of interest statement before beginning their service-learning experience or field practicum. Students should not undertake a service-learning or field practicum experience in an agency where prior relationships exist. Prior relationships exist if a student is a former or current client of the agency, is a former or present employee of the agency, is a current or former volunteer at the agency, or has relatives or other close prior relationships with someone on staff at the practicum agency. Students are expected to immediately notify their classroom instructor and/or the Director of Field Education if such a relationship exists in placements being considered by the student (junior level) or offered by the Director of Field Education (senior practicum).

**Criminal Background Policy**

All social work students entering the junior or senior practicum are expected to notify the Director of Field Education of criminal charges which will be reflected in criminal background checks. Virginia State Criminal Code section 63.2-1719 identifies a list of “barrier crimes” which preclude students and employees from working in a number of specific settings. Prior to beginning the placement process, students with prior convictions must provide a complete official copy of any and all convictions (i.e., rap sheet), and sign a consent form that allows the Director of Field Education to share information with appropriate field education faculty and prospective field instructors. Students should be prepared to discuss this with a prospective agency. Failure to comply with this policy or to sign a consent form for release of this information may result in the student being unable to receive a placement. Providing incorrect
information on applications is considered application fraud and an honor code violation, and may lead to a student not being able to be placed in an agency. Students with a criminal history should understand that some agencies are unwilling and unable to host and supervise such students.

Depending on the specific charge, a student with a criminal history could find it difficult to obtain a field placement or employment in a human service agency. It is possible that a student with a criminal background would not be able to be placed in a field practicum or complete their degree program.

**Diversity Statement**

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

**Drug and Alcohol Policy**

Consistent with policies and standards of George Mason University, the Department of Social Work supports and enforces the George Mason University Alcohol Policy and University Drug Policy. Students are expected to review and comply with these policies in their entirety.

**University Alcohol Policy**

1. The possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages is limited to those locations and circumstances authorized by university policy.
2. Alcohol possession or consumption is prohibited in any residence hall room or suite where all residents assigned to that space are under the age of 21. Students over the age of 21 may possess alcoholic beverages in accordance with established university policy.

3. No alcoholic beverages may be consumed in public areas of residence halls. This includes, but is not limited to, hallways, study rooms, and lounges.

4. All offenses of this policy will be adjudicated by a hearing officer within the Office of Housing & Residence Life or the Office of Student Conduct.

5. A common sanction for an alcohol policy violation will be primarily educational, but (depending on severity and frequency of violations) may include a housing assignment change, probation period, suspension and/or dismissal from housing, or suspension and/or expulsion from the university.

6. All cases involving severely intoxicated students and/or police or emergency medical responses will normally be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. The hearing officer may mandate an evaluation by the Wellness, Alcohol, and Violence Education and Services (WAVES) Office or an equivalent outside agency.

7. The University will encourage parental involvement in accord with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

University Drug Policy

1. Use and/or possession of illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia are prohibited at George Mason University. Use and/or possession and distribution of prescription drugs without proper medical documentation is within the scope of this policy. Violation of this community standard will be considered a serious offense. Implementation of this policy will be in accord with established university procedures as contained in the Code of Student Conduct.

2. The University Police will enforce all applicable local, state, and federal laws in accord with established standing orders, procedures and guidelines.

3. There will be a university review of all reports of drug offenses involving George Mason University students. Student Conduct processes will operate independently of the criminal justice system.

4. Any student found responsible for a Code of Conduct policy violation involving drugs may, at the discretion of the hearing officer, be required to undergo an evaluation administered by personnel of the University’s Wellness, Alcohol, and Violence Education and Services (WAVES) Office as a sanction, or prior to re-admittance to the University if suspended.

5. The housing status of a residential student found in violation of a campus drug policy will be determined by the hearing officer. Guests and visitors found responsible for violating a campus drug regulation while in a residence hall will likely be issued a trespass order prohibiting their presence in any and all residential buildings of the George Mason
University campuses. This trespass order will be in effect for a minimum of one calendar year.

6. A common sanction for a student’s first violation involving possession or use of marijuana is likely to be a disciplinary probation period, and an educational referral (a fee for this service will be imposed). Repeated violations are likely to result in a suspension or dismissal from housing, and/or a University suspension.

7. A common sanction for any student found responsible for a violation involving sale or possession of an illegal substance, including prescription drugs, with intent to distribute is expulsion.

8. A common sanction for any student found responsible for use or possession of an illegal drug other than marijuana, including prescription drugs, is likely to be suspension from the University for a minimum of one year, and/or housing suspension or dismissal. The suspended student may be asked to provide documentation of successful completion of a drug treatment program prior to reinstatement.

Department of Social Work Drug and Alcohol Policy

The abuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the GMU community is incompatible with the goals of the University. Those in need of assistance in dealing with such problems are encouraged to seek the confidential services of the CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) and WAVES (Wellness, Alcohol, and Violence Education and Services).

Abuse of drugs and/or alcohol will be grounds for termination of a student from the program. Substance abuse of any kind will impair a student’s judgment and the ability to work effectively with clients in the field practicum setting.

The Department of Social Work has a Drug-Free Practicum Policy regarding the use, abuse, selling, trading, or offering for sale and/or distribution alcohol, illegal drugs, over the counter (OTC) or prescription drugs that impair functioning or are distributed illegally, and other intoxicants, such as the abuse of inhalants.

Students who fail a drug test as a condition of applying for or continuing in a field placement, must immediately notify the Director of Field Education. Failure to do so will result in termination from the program.

If a student violates the Drug-Free Practicum Policy, they will be withdrawn and terminated immediately from the field placement. A student is automatically suspended from the University for a minimum of one year. The suspended student must provide evidence of successful participation in a drug treatment program prior to reinstatement.

The Department of Social Work recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse and addiction are treatable illnesses and early intervention and support improve the success of rehabilitation: Students are encouraged to self-identify if they are having problems with using drugs or alcohol and seek help from qualified professionals to assess the seriousness of suspected drug or alcohol problems and identify appropriate sources of help. Serving clients while impaired is a violation of the NASW Code of Ethics.
**Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy**

George Mason University and the Department of Social Work are committed to a learning environment that supports tolerance and values diversity. The policy on equal opportunity and affirmative action is as follows:

George Mason University and the Department of Social Work are an equal opportunity and affirmative action institution and the Department is committed to the principle that access to study or employment opportunities afforded by the university and program, including all benefits and privileges, be accorded to each person—student, faculty, or staff—on the basis of individual merit and without regard to race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, veteran status, disability, sexual or political orientation, sex, or age (except where sex or age is a bona fide occupational qualification).

**Grading Policy**

The BSW program has a grading scale that is used by all instructors. Grades are assigned according to the following numerical breakdown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>75-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>69-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>58-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opportunities for extra credit are only offered to the entire class, not individuals, and are up to the discretion of the instructor.

**Grievance Procedures**

The faculty recognizes that at times there may be a problem that is not easily solved, so the following grievance procedures have been instituted:

1. The aggrieved person, in most cases, should discuss the issue with the person they have a grievance against, whether student, faculty, or field instructor.
2. If the issue is unresolved at this level, the aggrieved person may, but is not required to, discuss this grievance with a student ombudsperson chosen by the student organization.
3. If the grievance is still unresolved, the aggrieved person should discuss the issue with their academic advisor.
4. If the grievance is still unresolved, the aggrieved person should discuss the issue with the BSW Program Director. Grievances related to field practicum should be discussed with the Director of Field Education prior to bringing the matter to the attention of the BSW Program Director.
5. If the grievance is still unresolved, the issue can go to the university ombudsman or to a grievance committee, which is selected by the following procedures:
   - The aggrieved person selects a member for the grievance committee.
   - The person who has the grievance filed against them selects a person for the grievance committee.
   - The Department Chair selects a grievance committee of three faculty members, according to university policy.
   - The grievance committee presents recommendations to the Department Chair.

BSW Student Handbook 2016-17
• The Department Chair studies the recommendations in relation to existing administrative policies and procedures and issues a decision (see University catalog, Appeals Policies chapter).

6. If the issues are still not resolved, students may make an appeal to the Dean, College of Health and Human Services (See CHHS Appeals Process). Please note that students may not take their appeal to the college until every attempt has been made to resolve the grievance in the Department of Social Work, following the steps outlined above.

Immunizations and Fees

All students who are enrolled in a course involving a field placement (SOCW 453 and SOCW 456) must have an annual tuberculosis screening (PPD) and the entire hepatitis B immunization series in accordance with U.S. Public Health Service recommendations. The hepatitis B series takes about 7 months to complete and is a lifetime immunization; you should begin the immunization process when you are enrolled in SOCW 311. The cost of the immunizations is the responsibility of the student. The majority of agencies used for field placements require fingerprinting, a criminal background check (may be more extensive than the university requirement), and/or a child protective services check. Any cost related to these requirements is also the responsibility of the student.

Incomplete Grades

A student must ask for a grade of Incomplete, and a faculty member may assign an Incomplete in the following cases:

Student has not completed the required field work hours and is expected to be able to complete the assignment by the end of the 9th week of the following academic semester, and/or due to serious extenuating circumstances, the student is not able to take the final examination or complete a major project by the due date.

Both faculty and student must sign the Contract for Completing an Incomplete. A copy of the form can be obtained in the Department.

Late Assignments

All assignments are expected to be submitted by the due date and time specified in the syllabus. The BSW Program policy for late assignments is a 10% point deduction if received within one week of the due date. Any work submitted after one week will not be accepted or graded. If you are aware of circumstances that may inhibit your ability to submit an assignment on time, discuss your situation with your instructor immediately and prior to the deadline. Exceptions to due dates are rare and at the sole discretion of the instructor. Exams must be taken on the date scheduled. Anticipated conflicts should be shared with the instructor as soon as they are known, so that alternate arrangements can be made. Rescheduling of exams is at the discretion of the instructor.
**Policy for Terminating BSW Students from the Social Work Program**

**Purpose:**
To maintain the academic integrity of the program and to prepare quality social work practitioners, students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic performance levels and adhere to standards of professional behavior.

I. Policy Statement
The Department of Social Work retains the right to terminate from the BSW or MSW program students who are unable to meet performance or behavioral standards. It should be noted that termination is considered a rare occurrence and that students have a right to appeal a termination decision.

II. Termination From Program
Termination are categorized as either academic or non-academic terminations.

**Academic Termination**

A. Graduate Students
Policy for graduate students can be found in the MSW Student Handbook

B. Undergraduate Students

The Department of Social Work follows the university policy regarding termination from the major. Please refer to AP.5.2.4 Termination from the Major in the Undergraduate Policies section of the university catalog. If the student does not have the minimum 2.50 GPA for admission into the social work major, the student will not be admitted into the major. Undergraduate students without the minimum GPA are not permitted to continue into the senior-level social work courses (please see University Catalog).

C. A student may enroll in the following classes a maximum of two times during the program:

- **BSW Program**: SOCW 452, 453, 454, 456
- **MSW Program**: SOCW 672, 673, 692, 693, 694, 695

Earning a second unsatisfactory grade in any of these courses warrants academic termination from the program.

**Non-Academic Termination**

The following applies to both undergraduate and graduate students:

A. If a student interviews with an agency identified by the Field Director and the student is not accepted for placement due to reasons under the control of the student, the Field Director may consider providing a referral to a second placement interview for the student. If the student interviews for a second placement and is not accepted for placement due to reasons under their control, the student will need to resubmit practicum planning materials for the following academic year.
B. If a student is disrupted from their field practicum for non-ethical violations, the Field Director may consider replacing the student in a new agency the same academic year. If the student is disrupted from a second agency, the Field Director will request termination from the program. Regardless of the timeframe between disrupted placements a student will be recommended for termination from the Social Work program immediately after a second failed field placement.

C. The student is convicted of a felony during the educational program.

D. The student possesses, uses, sells, trades, or offers for sale alcohol, illegal drugs, or intoxicants while in the classroom, practicum, or junior service learning.

E. The student abuses, sells, trades, or offers for sale over-the-counter or prescription drugs while in the classroom, practicum, or junior service learning affecting their ability to perform learning experiences.

F. The student engages in misconduct of any kind to include stalking, sexual harassment or assault, or any other behavior considered inappropriate.

G. Problematic behavior that impairs the student’s ability to maintain professional decorum in the classroom or practicum.

H. The student falsifies program or agency documents.

I. The student violates a University policy (Honor Code, Sexual Harassment, Substance Abuse, etc.), resulting in suspension.

J. The student fails or refuses to comply with remediation plans generated by the faculty in concert with the student.

K. The student violates the NASW Code of Ethics.

L. The student fails to comply with the Social Work Departmental criminal background policy.

**Non-Academic Termination Procedure**

A. The referring faculty member notifies the student and the Program Director (BSW or MSW) in writing of the grounds of misconduct and recommendations of termination from the program. If the Program Director is the faculty member directly involved with the termination circumstances, a second faculty member will be designated by the Department Chair to consider the termination case.

B. Within 5 business days of the termination recommendation, the Program Director or designee will notify the student in writing to include the following:

1. The reasons for the recommended termination from the program;

2. A request for the student to schedule a conduct review hearing;
C. The Conduct Review Hearing must be held within 10 business days of the original referral. Attendees of the Conduct Review Hearing will be limited to the student, the Program Director or designee, and the referring faculty.

D. Results of the Conduct Review Hearing:

1. If the Program Director or designee and the referring faculty member determine that termination is not necessary, a remediation plan with a completion date will be written and implemented immediately. If the remediation plan is not completed by the date, the Program Director or designee will recommend termination from the program to the Department Chair.

2. If the Program Director or designee and the referring faculty member determine that the student should be terminated, the Program Director will notify the referring faculty member and the Department Chair in writing within 5 business days.

E. The Department Chair will review the findings and make a determination of the results and will notify the student, Program Director or designee, and the referring faculty member in writing within 3 business days of receiving the Conduct Review Hearing results. The Department Chair may uphold the request of termination or request that the Program Director or designee and the referring faculty member write a remediation plan with the student.

F. If the student is terminated and disagrees with the decision, the student may appeal the termination decision through the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in the College of Health and Human Services. The student must contact the Assistant Dean within 5 business days of the written termination notice by the Department Chair.

Professional Ethics

Students are expected to read and abide by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (see http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp). Violation of the NASW Code of Ethics is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Professional Signature

Please add an automatic signature to your email on all of your devices. A typical professional signature includes your full name and email address. Here is an example:

Jane Social Worker
BSW Student, 2016-2018
jsocialworker@gmu.edu
### Professional Standards and Behavior

The Department of Social Work has established these minimum standards for professional standards and behavior expected of all students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Behavior and Core Standard</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong>: Student will attend classes, field practicum, and scheduled meetings.</td>
<td>Student has missed a number of classes, field practicum and/or scheduled meetings.</td>
<td>Student consistently attends classes, field practicum, and/or scheduled meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Punctuality</strong>: Student will be punctual to classes and practicum activities.</td>
<td>Student has been frequently late to class/practicum/meetings or left early.</td>
<td>Student is on time to class/practicum/meetings and stays until the end except in unusual circumstances that are considered excusable by the professor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiation of Communication</strong>: Student will initiate communication regarding challenges and concerns.</td>
<td>Student neglects to initiate contact with instructors/supervisors in a timely manner regarding challenges and concerns.</td>
<td>Student contacts instructor/supervisor with challenges and concerns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal Skills</strong>: Student will demonstrate the ability to relate effectively to other students, faculty staff clients and other professionals.</td>
<td>Student is rarely able to demonstrate empathy, compassion, objectivity, respect and consideration of others, or appropriate ability to relate to faculty, staff, clients, and professionals.</td>
<td>Student consistently relates well with others, and is able to demonstrate appropriate interaction with faculty, staff, clients, and other professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respect and Collegiality</strong>: Student will demonstrate respect and collegiality in professional relationships.</td>
<td>Student is frequently disrespectful to classmates, staff, faculty, and/or community members.</td>
<td>Student is consistently respectful to classmates, staff, faculty, and/or community members, and demonstrates support in these relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Awareness</strong>: Student will demonstrate self-awareness and appropriate self-disclosure.</td>
<td>Student rarely demonstrates self-awareness of impact of personal experiences, beliefs, culture, bias, etc., and/or engages in inappropriate self-disclosure.</td>
<td>Student consistently demonstrates a high level of self-awareness about the impact personal experiences, beliefs, culture, bias, etc., and engages in appropriate self-disclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity Awareness</strong>: Student will demonstrate awareness and responsiveness to diversity and difference.</td>
<td>Student’s classroom or other student related interactions rarely demonstrates respect for and appreciation of diverse opinions, experiences and/or people.</td>
<td>Student’s classroom or other student related interactions consistently demonstrates respect for, and appreciation of, diverse opinions, experiences, and/or people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong>: Student will engage in collaborative interactions.</td>
<td>Student rarely demonstrates collaborative skills in work with others, and/or has poor relationships with classmates or others involved in student learning.</td>
<td>Student consistently works collaboratively with team members, and engages positively with others.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Professional Behavior and Core Standard</td>
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<td>Acceptable</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Engagement:</strong> Student will appropriately engage in class activities/discussions.</td>
<td>Student rarely engages in class activities/discussions and does not make an effort to do so following feedback, or student frequently monopolizes the learning space, limiting others’ engagement and/or inhibiting the learning environment.</td>
<td>Student consistently engages in class activities/discussions and does not monopolize the learning space in a way that it limits others’ engagement and/or the learning environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Expression:</strong> Student will demonstrate a high level of written expression.</td>
<td>Student’s writing demonstrates significant impairment in content, grammar, spelling, syntax, and/or flow. Has not demonstrated sufficient writing skills to express ideas and feelings.</td>
<td>Student’s writing demonstrates very good to excellent content, grammar, spelling, structure, and/or flow. Demonstrates good to excellent writing skills in expressing ideas and feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verbal Expression:</strong> Student will demonstrate a high level of verbal expression.</td>
<td>Student’s has not demonstrated sufficient verbal skills to express ideas and feelings.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates good to excellent verbal skills in expressing ideas and feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability:</strong> Student will demonstrate reliability.</td>
<td>Student rarely completes and submits assignments and/or work on time.</td>
<td>Assignments and/or work is almost always submitted on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsiveness to Feedback:</strong> Student will demonstrate evidence of motivation to improve performance.</td>
<td>Student has not demonstrated receptiveness to suggestions and feedback from others and, therefore, makes no effort to adjust performance accordingly.</td>
<td>Student is consistently receptive to suggestions or feedback and adjusts performance accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compliance with Social Work Department Requirements:</strong> Student will comply with the professional conduct policies in the BSW, MSW, and Field Education handbooks.</td>
<td>Student is minimally compliant with department policies.</td>
<td>Student is fully compliant with department requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics:</strong> Student will demonstrate a professional commitment to, and compliance with, the NASW Code of Ethics.</td>
<td>Student minimally abides by the NASW Code of Ethics.</td>
<td>Student is fully compliant with the Code of Ethics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong> Student’s presentation will be appropriate for the setting.</td>
<td>Student’s presentation is consistently inappropriate for professional and classroom settings.</td>
<td>Student’s presentation is consistently appropriate for classroom and professional settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stress Management:</strong> Student will recognize and manage current life stressors through the use of appropriate self-care.</td>
<td>Student identifies significant life stressors, but refuses to seek appropriate support or to engage in proper self-care.</td>
<td>Student consistently seeks help when needed in managing life stressors. Student identifies and practices appropriate self-care activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotional and Mental Capacities:</strong> Student will prevent personal and professional issues from impairing performance and judgment, and</td>
<td>Student misses days and/or assignments at practicum, supervision, appointments or classes due to impairment, or behaves in ways that are</td>
<td>Student behaves in ways that demonstrate sound judgment. Medical and emotional problems are contained so as not to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Professional Behavior and Core Standard

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<tr>
<td>impacting professional responsibilities.</td>
<td>disturbing. Student behaves in ways at practicum that cause clients and/or supervisor to question competence and/or judgment.</td>
<td>impede functioning and are not noticeable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional judgement:**
- Student will engage in a problem-solving approach to determine appropriate action.
- Student does not engage in a problem-solving approach when considering how to respond to classroom and/or practicum issues.
- Student consistently engages in a problem-solving approach when considering appropriate action.

Approved by the Social Work Faculty: May 11, 2016

### Recommendations for Graduate School or Employment

Before listing a faculty member as a reference, you must first check with the faculty member to determine if he or she is willing to provide a reference. If a faculty member agrees to write a reference letter, be sure to provide all appropriate forms, instructions, and a stamped envelope. Please be sure to give your recommender enough time (e.g., 3-4 weeks) in order to be respectful of his/her time.

### Student Requests for Academic Actions

All requests for academic actions, such as special permissions or exceptions to published academic regulations, must be submitted through the student’s advisor or the BSW Program Director. Request forms and instructions on how to initiate an academic action are available on the Registrar’s website: [http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/](http://registrar.gmu.edu/forms/).

### Student Status Review

Following receipt of notice of termination from the BSW Program, if a student can demonstrate that due process was not followed, the student may ask the Department Chair in writing to call a Student Status Review Committee (SSRC) to review the process. The purpose of the SSRC is to ensure that due process was given. Due process involves a determination of whether the departmental procedures and policies have been followed leading to a decision to terminate a student from the program. Requests for review by the SSRC must be made by the student directly to the Department Chair:

- The Department Chair will appoint two social work faculty members and a faculty member from the College of Health and Human Services to form a committee to review the procedures followed by the department and determine if due process was afforded to the student.
- The committee will send a recommendation to the Department Chair, who will make the final decision regarding due process and notify the student in writing of that decision.
- If the committee and the Department Chair concur that due process was followed, the termination decision will remain. However, if the committee and/or Department Chair find that due process was not followed, the Department Chair will take appropriate action to
reassess the original termination decision in order for a student to be afforded due process.

- Students who desire to appeal the Departmental decision may follow the procedures outlined in the University catalog for appealing a decision made by the department.

**University and Social Work Program Sexual Harassment Policy and Title IX**

Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be condoned in any form at George Mason University or in the Department of Social Work. This policy is part of the university effort to maintain a learning and work environment free from sexual harassment. While this problem can seriously affect all members of an educational community, sexual harassment can be particularly devastating for our student population. A sexual harassment experience can affect a student's well-being, impair academic progress, and even inhibit the attainment of career goals. This problem can likewise affect employees and applicants for either employment or admissions to the university in the same manner. Therefore, George Mason University must move to eliminate this problem from our community.

Using the definitions of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Department of education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR), the university defines sexual harassment as follows: “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute harassment when (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's academic performance or employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions about academic evaluation, employment, promotion, transfer, selection for training, performance evaluation, or selection for academic awards or benefits, etc.; (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment or substantially interferes with a student’s academic or an employee’s work performance.”

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex under any education program or activity receiving federal financial aid. Sexual assault and sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment free from discrimination. Any gender based discrimination, including sexual misconduct which includes but is not limited to, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship violence and sexual exploitation committed by George Mason students, staff, or faculty will not be tolerated. This applies to academic, educational, athletic, residential, and other University operated programs. George Mason encourages individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct by a Mason student or employee to seek assistance. For more information, please visit: [http://integrity.gmu.edu/compliance/titleIX.cfm](http://integrity.gmu.edu/compliance/titleIX.cfm).

**Working in Groups**

Many of the social work classes use small groups as a vehicle for learning. Small groups provide an opportunity for working with fellow students on a joint learning project. This sometimes makes accomplishing the task more efficient and the finished project more comprehensive. However, when one or more students do not carry out their share of the
responsibilities, it creates conflict and controversy within the group. Nonetheless, the experience teaches tact, diplomacy, patience, stress management, respect for others, and similar skills that are useful in working in teams in the profession, and translate well to life experiences. Students need to learn to be team players and groups offer this opportunity. Some good strategies for working in groups include the following:

- Assign tasks and responsibilities to each individual at the initial group meeting. Be clear as to what the expectations are of each individual group member. Phone numbers and email addresses should be exchanged during the initial meeting.
- Give members warning if you feel they are not meeting their responsibilities.
- Let the professor know when a group member continues to be unresponsive and/or irresponsible.
- When asked by the professor to grade the performance of fellow students within the group, be fair, but firm.
- Confronting someone about his or her failure to be responsible must be handled delicately, and the student who is confronted has to accept criticism in the constructive manner in which it is intended.
- Letting a fellow student’s failures slide is not doing yourself, your group, and his/her future clients any favors.
- Try to focus on the positive points of each member, and remember to give praise when praise is due. Not every student can present well, nor can every student write well, but every group member brings a uniqueness to the composition of the group. When assigning tasks within the group, make use of everyone’s talents.
VI. CAMPUS RESOURCES AND STUDENT LIFE

Campus Resources

The following is a list of University resources, which may be helpful to students who are encountering barriers to their academic success or personal growth.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): Student Union Building 1, Room 3129; 703-993-2380; http://caps.gmu.edu/

Disability Services (DS)
Student Union Building I, Room 2500 • 703.993.2474

DS implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities for students with disabilities (cognitive, learning, psychological, sensory, mobility, and other physical impairments).

IT Services for Students: http://itservices.gmu.edu/services/services-students.cfm

Learning Services: Student Union Building 1, Room 3129; 703-993-2999;
http://caps.gmu.edu/learning-services/

Libraries:
Students should be aware that there are libraries other than George Mason University's Fenwick Library (http://library.gmu.edu/) and Johnson Center Library in the Washington metropolitan area that assist in finding appropriate resources for social work courses. The Catholic University of America, American University, and the Library of Congress, among others, are excellent resource centers.

American University    Library of Congress
Gallaudet University    NIH/NIMH
George Washington University    University of the District of Columbia
Georgetown University    University of Maryland
Howard University

Office of Student Conduct: Student Union Building I, Room 4100; 703.993.6209

The Office of Student Conduct is responsible for resolving allegations of misconduct under Student Code of Conduct.

Office of the Ombudsman: Research Hall, Room 344; 703.993.3306;
http://ombudsman.gmu.edu/

The ombudsman is a neutral, independent, informal, and confidential person who listens to student academic concerns, provides advice and referrals, and helps students resolve academic conflicts. The ombudsman is an advocate for fairness and the equitable treatment of students and operates independently of all formal grievance processes at the university. Meetings with the ombudsman are confidential. The ombudsman does not overturn academic actions but may recommend academic policy changes, where appropriate.
Honor Societies

For students who excel academically, there are several honor societies to which they can apply for membership, such as Golden Key, Alpha Chi, and Phi Alpha, the Social Work Honor Society. A chapter of Phi Alpha, the Social Work Honor Society, was established in 1990 and students have been inducted since its inception. An overall GPA of 3.50 is required to be invited to join this honor society. An invitation for membership is extended to students who qualify academically in May of the year the student will graduate. Students are encouraged to join these honor societies as they enhance their applications to graduate school and employment opportunities.

The John J. Hughes Scholarship

The John J. Hughes Scholarship was established in memory of the professor who began the Social Work Program at Mason. He was committed to helping those who demonstrated academic achievement, as well as those who overcame difficult odds in their lives but persevered in seeking to achieve their goals. An announcement about the application deadline will be sent through email. The recipient is selected on the basis of these criteria:

- Academic achievement
- Financial need
- Statement explaining the obstacles the student has overcome
- Statement explaining one achievement or contribution of which the student is most proud

Professional Affiliations

Students are encouraged to join the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), which is the professional organization that addresses the needs of social workers. There are three chapters in the DC metropolitan area: the Virginia Chapter, Metro Chapter (Washington, D.C.), and Maryland Chapter. When you join NASW you will be assigned to a chapter based on your preferred mailing address. Students are given the opportunity to affiliate with the chapter in their home state or in the state where their school is located. Applications for NASW can be found
online at https://www.socialworkers.org/online-join/join.aspx. The cost for joining NASW is reduced for students. NASW provides identification with the profession, ongoing continuing education, networking with other social workers, legislative advocacy for the profession, liability insurance for students and professionals, a journal, and numerous other services.

Social Work Student Association (SWSA)

The Social Work Student Association has been a vital part of bringing unity to the social work student body. In the past, the SWSA has conducted fundraisers to assist community groups, organized events to educate others about social work issues, and has established a student scholarship fund. The SWSA works to bring social work students together socially and provides students with mutual assistance in the field and classroom.

The leadership of the SWSA works to schedule meetings in order to accommodate both junior and senior schedules. Meetings may include speakers from area graduate schools, interesting community programs, and topics of special interest. Efforts are made to be responsive to student concerns, including forming study groups, sharing information about field placements, contacting alumni, and guiding sophomores, juniors, and seniors regarding department and course expectations. A representative from the SWSA is invited to attend regularly scheduled faculty meetings. All students are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in the Social Work Student Association. Election of officers takes place in the spring of each year. For the 2016-17 academic year, SWSA leadership and faculty advisors are:

Shayna Krammes (President) – skramme2@gmu.edu
Shawn Pham (Vice President and Events) – spham5@gmu.edu
Genesis Andia (Secretary) – gandia@gmu.edu
Jennifer Robles (Treasurer) – jrobles2@gmu.edu

Faculty Advisors:
Prof. Kathy Prudden – kprudden@gmu.edu
Dr. JoAnn Lee – jlee120@gmu.edu
Prof. Sharolyn Dugger – sdugger@gmu.edu

Title IV-E Child Welfare Stipend Program

Beginning in the 2017-18 academic year, the Department of Social Work, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Social Services, will offer a specialized training program, funded through title IV-E of the Social Security Act, to prepare BSW and MSW students for a career in child welfare. Students accepted into this program receive a $10,000 stipend per academic year. In exchange for the stipend and extensive child welfare training, the stipend recipient must commit to work at a local Department of Social Services within the state of Virginia (one calendar year for each academic year that the stipend was received). This employment obligation must begin within three months of graduation. The application will be available on the department website and the deadline is January 31, 2017.
VII. AFTER GRADUATION

Employment

The BSW degree is considered the first professional degree in many agency settings. Many jurisdictions require that social workers be licensed before they can be employed, as is true in Washington, D.C., and Maryland. Virginia continues to have optional licensing. Be sure to investigate state licensing requirements. Personal references from social work professors are invaluable in acquiring professional positions in the field of social work. Students should keep this in mind while pursuing the social work major.

Graduate School

Students who wish to continue their studies in graduate school should apply early, especially if they are interested in advanced standing. Students should check and re-check to ensure that they have completed all the necessary requirements for application to graduate school and that all materials have been received by the graduate school(s) to which application is made.

Students are advised to allow professors, agency supervisors, field liaisons, and advisors ample time to complete a letter of recommendation to the graduate school. Most advisors and professors are asked to write letters for more than one student. Out of courtesy, please provide your recommender with a packet that includes the signed release on the form for the recommendation letter, your most recent resume, and a brief statement about your career interests and plans for further study. If you are asking for multiple letters of recommendation from the same person, provide a cover sheet with the names of the schools, addresses, and deadline for the recommendation. Please be sure to give your recommender enough time (e.g., 3-4 weeks) in order to be respectful of his/her time.

Advanced Standing

Advanced standing may be an option for students who have completed the BSW from a CSWE-accredited Social Work program. Students with high GPAs and excellent field evaluations are more competitive for advanced standing. Be sure to check the requirements of each specific graduate school.

The general guidelines used by faculty to recommend students for advanced standing include outstanding academic and professional performance in class and field work; ability to analyze and conceptualize the social work process; potential for successful MSW practice with the equivalent of one year of full-time study in the MSW program; and emotional maturity.

Students should also note that advanced standing in a graduate school is not guaranteed even if all the school’s requirements have been met. Advanced standing usually means that the MSW can be completed in one academic year rather than two years, but check the school’s specific waiver.
VIII. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY AND STAFF PROFILES

Full Time Faculty

Carol Cleaveland, Ph.D., M.S.S., Associate Professor
ccleavel@gmu.edu; 703.993.2597

Dr. Cleaveland, who joined the faculty in the fall of 2007, teaches courses in social policy, immigration and in community clinical practice. Her research focus is immigration, with particular interest in human smuggling of migrants from Central America and Mexico. Using ethnographic and other qualitative methods, she has been seeking to understand the processes of becoming an immigrant. Dr. Cleaveland began studying immigration in 2004, with an ethnographic study of Mexican day laborers in New Jersey. Her previous research was a longitudinal study of women in Philadelphia who had been forced off welfare and into the low-wage labor sector. She has published in both social work and interdisciplinary social science journals. She has been a social work practitioner in clinical settings since 1994, having earned both her PhD (2002) and MSS from Bryn Mawr College, where she received the Hathaway award for academic excellence. Prior to entering graduate school, she was a newspaper reporter. She has a BA (1980) in political science/print journalism from American University.

Valerie C. Cuffee, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., C.P.M., Instructor
vcuffee@gmu.edu; 703.993.2024

Professor Cuffee joined the full-time faculty in 2013. She has taught courses in the Direct Clinical Practice series, Communication and Technology, Organizational Leadership, and Social Policy. She has extensive administrative experiences developing, directing, leading and evaluating behavioral health, child welfare, domestic violence, intellectual and developmental disability, and substance abuse services for children and their families at the local and state levels. She also has extensive experiences building community coalitions and providing direct services. Professor Cuffee continues to serve on boards and committees addressing child and family issues. She is a graduate of Hampton University (BA, Psychology) and Norfolk State University (MSW). Professor Cuffee has been licensed to practice clinical social work in the Commonwealth of Virginia since 1993 and she received certification in 2000 from The George Washington University to practice as a public manager (CPM).

Molly Everett Davis, Ed.D., M.S.W., Associate Professor & Associate Field Director
mdavi7@gmu.edu; 703.993.2028

Dr. Davis is an experienced faculty member who is currently serving as the interim Co-Director of Field Education. Her research and writing interests are broad and include mental health policy, gerontology, intergenerational practice, prevention, social work and technology, cultural competency, personal safety risk management and youth suicide prevention. She has an extensive background in building community coalitions and advocacy. Dr. Davis serves on numerous boards and committees. She is a graduate of Louisiana State University (BA, Psychology), Tulane University (MSW), and Florida State University (Ed.D., Higher Education Administration).

Sharolyn Dugger, M.S.W., L.M.S.W., Director of Field Education
sdugger@gmu.edu; 703.993.6044

Sharolyn Dugger joined the GMU Social Work faculty in 2015 as the Field Education Director. She received her MSW from the University of Kansas and practiced community social work for 13 years. She served in the non-profit sector of children and families, child welfare and developmental disabilities. She was the Associate Director of Field Education for the University of Kansas prior to joining George Mason University.
Professor Guillory brings a wealth of teaching, training, clinical and research experience to George Mason University. Professor Guillory has worked in various areas of social work including forensics, outpatient mental health, school mental health, child welfare, and homeless services. She is a licensed clinical social worker in the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland. Professor Guillory has a specialization in the area of trauma and trauma treatment. She served as a member of a federal committee on trauma informed care and was invited to participate on a national committee on trauma-informed services. She worked as a Director of Women’s Trauma and Forensics Team and as a Trauma Training Coordinator. In addition, she has worked on several trauma research projects and grants. Professor Guillory has conducted numerous workshops in the community, schools, government, and private agencies on trauma, vicarious traumatization, and various other topics related to mental health and co-occurring disorders. She co-wrote a trauma intervention which has been implemented in various agencies locally and nationally. She has served as visiting professor, lecturer, and adjunct professor in social work and sociology. Professor Guillory’s research interests include poly-trauma and cumulative trauma, women’s health, health and mental health care disparities, and culturally competent mental health treatment. Professor Guillory received her BA is psychology from California State University, East Bay and her MSW from California State University, Sacramento. She is completing her PhD in Sociology at Howard University with a specialization in medical sociology and criminology. She earned certificates in Trauma Treatment and Child and Adolescent Treatment from the University of Maryland School of Social Work Continuing Professional Education.

Emily S. Ihara, Ph.D., M.S.W., Associate Professor & BSW Program Director
elihara@gmu.edu; 703.993.2023

Dr. Ihara joined the faculty in the fall of 2006 and teaches courses on social policy and social justice, the social determinants of health, human rights, ethics, and gerontology. Her research focuses on social determinants of health inequities across the life course, particularly for older adults, racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations. An overarching goal of her research is to inform the development of contextually-relevant policies and services for non-dominant populations using the social determinants of health framework. Current research projects include examining the effects of music and creative arts interventions on the health and well-being of older adults with dementia; integrating systems science methods that may be used as tools to forecast and test levers that affect system outcomes; and investigating dialysis patient experiences with different dialysis modalities. Dr. Ihara has worked as a researcher and policy analyst for various organizations and brings her extensive social work clinical experience in health and mental health arenas to her understanding of research and policy. Dr. Ihara is a graduate of UC Berkeley (A.B.), UCLA (M.S.W.), and the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University (Ph.D., M.A.).

Megumi Inoue, Ph.D., M.S.W., R.N., Assistant Professor
minoue2@gmu.edu; 703.993.2737

Dr. Inoue joined the faculty in the fall of 2014. Her research focuses on health and aging, and she is particularly interested in end-of-life issues and patients’ autonomy in health care settings. She is currently involved in research on the procedures for administering advance directives in Medicare and Medicaid-funded institutions, healthcare professionals’ knowledge and attitudes toward advance care planning, and the effects of personalized music intervention among older adults with dementia. Dr. Inoue teaches Clinical Practice with Older Adults, Death & Dying, Research in Social Work, and Advanced Research in Social Work. Dr. Inoue received her Ph.D. in Social Work from Boston College, and her MSW from Washington University in St. Louis. Prior to coming to George Mason University, she worked as a social worker at a Japanese social service agency in Boston for three years while she was earning her doctoral degree. She also has twelve years of practice experience as a registered nurse in Japan.
Dr. Kirsch joined the faculty in 2010 and has a focus in trauma and recovery as well as issues of spirituality and sexuality. Prior to coming to GMU, Dr. Kirsch was Head of Training at the Counseling Center at Wheelock College, Teaching Associate in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and Clinical Coordinator at the Center for Women’s Development focusing on Trauma and Eating Disorders at Arbour-HRI Hospital. She previously held faculty positions at Emory University, the College of William and Mary, and at Goddard College. Dr. Kirsch is the faculty practice professor and in addition to a clinical social work practice focusing on a relational approach offering EMDR and DBT to trauma survivors, works with the transgender population in the Northern Virginia area. Dr. Kirsch received her Ph.D. (Women's Studies) from Emory University, her MSW (Clinical Practice) from Boston University, her MA (History of Religions/Sanskrit) from the Divinity School of the University Chicago, and her BA (Philosophy and Theology) from Georgetown University.

Dr. Lee, who joined the faculty in 2013, teaches courses on social policy, child welfare, and research methods. Her research focuses on the transition to adulthood for vulnerable youth, such as youth aging out of the foster care system. Prior to George Mason University, Dr. Lee was a postdoctoral fellow at Seattle Children’s Research Institute, where she examined relationships between social contexts and youth behaviors. Her prior clinical work experiences include addressing substance use issues among juvenile justice and Asian American youth populations. She is a graduate of Stanford University (BA in Psychology), Columbia University (MSW/MPA) and the University of Washington (PhD).

Dr. Matto (MSW, University of Michigan, PhD, University of Maryland) is Associate Professor in the College of Health and Human Services Department of Social Work at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Prior to that Dr. Matto was at VCU School of Social Work for ten years where she taught theories of human behavior, direct practice, and research methods in the master’s and doctoral programs. She has over 15 years of research and practice experience in the field of addiction science and has conducted treatment intervention studies with diverse clinical populations. Recently she conducted a clinical trial with Inova Fairfax Hospital and Georgetown University’s Center for Functional and Molecular Imaging that used neuroimaging technology to examine functional and structural brain change associated with behavioral health interventions for substance-dependent adults. In addition, she is engaged in research that examines the effects of an integrated music, imagery and movement intervention to improve mood and promote cognitive functioning in older adult residents living in a long-term care facility. She is most currently working on the prototype development of a wearable device to manage stimulus cues and reduce drug relapse by detecting neurophysiological reactivity and delivering a device-activated personalized music and imagery intervention (a STEAM-H: Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math – Health Initiative).

Professor Prudden earned an MSW from Virginia Commonwealth University, an Advanced Professional Certificate in Expressive Therapies Studies from Lesley University, and is an expressive therapy doctoral student at the European Graduate School. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the Commonwealth of Virginia and a clinical supervisor for those seeking licensure. She was an adjunct
professor at George Mason University for 8 years and joined the full time faculty in 2013. Professor Prudden has over 25 years of practice experience, working in inpatient, day treatment and outpatient psychiatric facilities, and a community sexual assault program. Her clinical areas of expertise are sexual trauma, crime victimization, grief and loss, and expressive therapies. Ms. Pruunned provides training for advocates and law enforcement personnel across the country on the bio-psycho-social effects of trauma and is, additionally, a trainer with the National Center for Campus Public Safety.

**Dennis J. Ritchie, Ph.D., M.S.W., Professor**

dritchi1@gmu.edu; 703.993.1951

Dr. Ritchie’s education and practice experience bridge the fields of social work and special education (Ph.D. in Special Education and Rehabilitation with concentration in Emotional Disturbance from Syracuse University, MSW with concentration in Health from University of Pennsylvania, and BA in Liberal Arts from State University of New York at Stony Brook). Practice experience includes providing consultation, education, and direct services in school settings and over the past 23 years he has been actively involved in international social work with a special interest in participatory action research and the linkage between social work and human rights. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Costa Rica, Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania, and the National Autonomous University of Honduras as a Senior Fulbright Scholar. He has held a number of professional leadership positions related to national and international social work including, for example, serving on the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation and the Global Commission and Committee on Human Rights; chairing the CSWE Council on Global Learning, Research & Practice; and chairing the NASW National International Social Work Committee. He has served as national reviewer for all Fulbright Scholar applications, across all disciplines, to Mexico and Central America. Dr. Ritchie’s scholarship includes collaborative research with Central American and Mason colleagues focusing on issues related to child and family welfare, children’s and women’s human rights, and the Latino immigrant community. Prior to George Mason University, he held faculty appointments at Cornell University and Nazareth College where he served as Social Work Department Chair.

**Sunny Harris Rome, J.D., M.S.W., Professor**

srome@gmu.edu; 703.993.2072

Professor Rome has an MSW degree from the University of Michigan and a JD from Georgetown University Law Center. She joined the full-time faculty at Mason in 1994. Recent teaching includes courses on Influencing Social Policy, Policies for Children & Youth, Social Work and the Law, Forensic Social Work Practice, and Empowering Communities for Change. Her research interests encompass youth in foster care, immigrant families in the child welfare system, and social work advocacy. She is the author of a popular textbook entitled *Social Work and Law: Judicial Policy and Forensic Practice*. Professor Rome has been recognized for her outstanding teaching by both the College of Health and Human Services at George Mason University and the Virginia Social Work Education Consortium. Before coming to Mason, she worked in the General Counsel’s Office of the U.S. Department of Education and later at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) where she lobbied on issues including welfare reform, child welfare, education, civil rights, and social services. She currently serves as President of Influencing Social Policy (ISP) and as a commissioner on the Special Commission to Advance Macro Practice in Social Work. She was selected as one of four national policy curriculum specialists by the Coalition for Policy Education & Practice in Social Work, and serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Social Work Education, the Journal of Teaching in Social Work, and the Journal of Policy Practice.

**Steven R. Rose, Ph.D., M.S.W., Professor**

srose@gmu.edu; 703.993.4204

Dr. Rose earned the BA from the City University of New York, the MSW from Washington University in St. Louis, and the Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has held professional consultative,
administrative, supervisory, and clinical practice positions in child, youth, and family services, education and school settings, and mental health organizations. He has served as principal investigator, co-principal investigator, evaluation consultant, and writer for research grants and contracts. Dr. Rose’s areas of specialization include children’s and adolescents’ social skills and interpersonal-cognitive problem-solving skills, peer relationships, and social competence mediated by small group processes. His publications include books, chapters, and journal articles on task groups in the social services, group work with children and adolescents, and social work practice with children and adolescents. He holds editorial board positions with academic and professional journals in social work and social welfare. He currently teaches undergraduate courses in human behavior in the social environment, and in methods of social work intervention.

Catherine J. Tompkins, PhD., M.S.W., Associate Professor & Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies, CHHS; ctomkin@gmu.edu; 703.993.2838

Dr. Tompkins joined the faculty in August, 2003 as the Director of the BSW Program. She is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work and the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies in the College of Health and Human Services. Dr. Tompkins teaches courses in research methods, human behavior, gerontology, and introduction to social work. Her research areas include: caregiving, interventions for dementia care, kinship care, and undergraduate education. Prior to joining the faculty at George Mason University, Dr. Tompkins was the Faculty Development Coordinator for the John A. Hartford funded Faculty Development Project at the Council on Social Work Education, Strengthening Aging and Gerontology Education for Social Work. Dr. Tompkins received both her MSW and PhD from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She was an assistant professor of Social Work and Gerontology at James Madison University from 1995–1998 and the Director of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education from 1998–2001. She is currently on the editorial board for three journals and serves on other local and national committees. Dr. Tompkins is a John A. Hartford Faculty Scholar in Geriatric Social Work.

Laura Cordisco Tsai, Ph.D., M.S.S.W., Assistant Professor lcordisc@gmu.edu; 703.993.7017

Dr. Tsai joined the faculty in 2014. Her research focuses on human trafficking and economic empowerment interventions, with a particular emphasis on economically-oriented prevention and reintegration support programs for people at risk for trafficking and people who have been trafficked. As a mixed methods researcher, she integrates a variety of quantitative, qualitative, and participatory approaches in her research. Dr. Tsai has over 10 years of social work practice and research experience pertaining to human trafficking, gender-based violence, and economic empowerment interventions in ten countries, primarily the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, and Mongolia. She graduated from Brown University (B.A.) and Columbia University (M.S.S.W., Ph.D.).

Michael Wolf-Branigin, M.S.W., Ph.D., PStat®, Professor & Chair mwolfbra@gmu.edu; 703.993.4229

Michael Wolf-Branigin, MSW, Ph.D., PStat® is Chair and Professor of Social Work at George Mason University. His research focuses on complex adaptive systems and their application to social work practice in relation to his substantive areas including behavioral health and intellectual and developmental disabilities. He worked for two decades in the addictions and disabilities fields. He received his a graduate diploma in economics from the University of Stockholm, an MSW from the University of Michigan, and a PhD in research and evaluation from Wayne State University. He has consulted for governmental and non-governmental organizations in the United States and abroad. For 18 years he has been an accreditation surveyor with CARF International. He is an Accredited Professional Statistician™ through the American Statistical Association, has written about 50 peer-reviewed articles and one book, and serves on the editorial boards and reviews for several academic journals.
Administrative Staff

Elaine Ervin, Administrative Assistant for Field Education
swfield@gmu.edu; 703.993.4245

Elaine Ervin joined the Department of Social Work in 2014. Elaine received a Bachelor’s in Global Affairs with honors from George Mason University. After graduating, she monitored and analyzed customer service calls for Asurion. She currently supports the development and implementation of the Field Practicum software. In addition, Elaine coordinates events for the Field Education Program.

Vannary C. Khov, Administrative and Office Specialist
vkhov@gmu.edu; 703.993.2030

Vannary C. Khov has worked for George Mason University since 1996 – in the College of Health and Human Services/Dean’s office from 1996 to 2003, in the Doctoral Division in the School of Nursing from October 2003 to May 2012, and in the Department of Social Work from May 2012 to the present. Prior to that, she was employed by the Embassy of Liberia, in Reston, VA.

Le Anne Wisnieski, Administrative Assistant for Student Affairs
lwisnies@gmu.edu; 703.993.4247

Le Anne Wisnieski earned her undergraduate degree in Psychology from Old Dominion University and previously worked for the American Psychological Association in Washington, D.C. for 10 years. Prior to joining the staff in the Department of Social Work, she spent her time volunteering at schools and within the community around Fairfax County.

Adjunct Faculty for the BSW Program (Fall 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharon Alston</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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# APPENDIX A: ADVISING WORKSHEET FOR SOCIAL WORK MAJORS
## 2016-2017 Academic Year

### Fall Semester

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<th>Course</th>
<th>Credit</th>
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<td>BIOL 103, Introduction to Biology I</td>
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<td>Natural Science (lab or non-lab)</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGH 101, Composition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>COMM 100 or COMM 101</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 101, Introductory Sociology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>HIST 100 or HIST 125</td>
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### Spring Semester

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<tr>
<td>Global Understanding</td>
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<td>ENGH 302, Adv Comp, Social Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 100, Basic Concepts in Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SOCW 200, Introduction to Social Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elective</td>
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### Course

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<th>Course</th>
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<th>Credit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCW 311, Building Prof SW Skills</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SOCW 312, Knowledge Building for Helping Professinals</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 357, Methods of SW Intervention (F)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 358, Methods of SW Interv II (S)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 361, Methods of SW Interv Lab (F)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 362, Methods of SW Interv Lab II (S)</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW 375, Human Behavior and Family Life</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SOCW 380, Changing Social Policies/Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SOCW 390, Analytic Methods of SW Research (S) (or STAT 250, SOCI 313, PSYC 300)</td>
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### Course

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<th>Credit</th>
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<tr>
<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 452, Senior Seminar I (F)</td>
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<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 454, Senior Seminar II (S)</td>
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<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 453, Senior Practicum I (F)</td>
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<td>(^\text{^}) SOCW 456, Senior Practicum II (S)</td>
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<td>SOCW 471, Research in Social Work</td>
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<td>SOCW 472 RS, Integrative Methods in Social Action and Social Change</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCW Elective (400-level)</td>
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<td>SOCW Elective (400-level)</td>
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<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elective</td>
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</table>

\(^\text{^}\) Must be taken concurrently

- Classes offered in **fall only**: SOCW 357, 361, 452 453, 471.
- Classes offered in **spring only**: SOCW 358, 362, 390, 454, 456, 472 RS.
- All required 300-level social work courses **must** be completed prior to beginning the senior field placement (SOCW 452/453).
- At least 120 credits are required to graduate, 45 of which must be Upper Level (300/400). PHED credits are limited to 6.
APPENDIX B: POSSIBLE FIELD PLACEMENT QUESTIONS

After students have been accepted into the major, the Field Education Department will refer students to a potential field placement site. In the interview, both student and the contact person at the site explore the appropriateness of this practicum assignment. Below is a list of questions that the student may wish to pose during the initial interview.

1. What kinds of activities and programs does this agency undertake?
2. What activities, tasks, and/or projects will I be able to undertake?
3. What specific skills will I be able to develop at this agency?
4. Does this agency have a particular theoretical approach to intervention?
5. What are the general characteristics of clients and communities served by this agency?
6. What is the approach to and the structure of supervision?
7. What amount of interaction would I have with other students and with permanent staff?
8. What opportunities exist for interprofessional collaboration or cooperation?
9. What types of in-service training or workshops and conferences will be available to me?
10. What types of cases and/or projects do you anticipate assigning to me?
11. What types of skills do you hope a student will bring to the agency?
12. How much independence and initiative do you expect me to demonstrate?
13. How are students helped to handle issues of diversity regarding age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and mental and physical ability on both staff and client levels?
14. What are the hours of operation and is after-hours work expected of students?
15. What is the agency’s dress code?
16. What safety precautions should I be aware of?
APPENDIX C: TIPS & TRICKS

Here are some “tips and tricks” to help you survive – and thrive – in the BSW Program.

**Get organized.** Print a copy of each course syllabus and keep it with you. Track assignment due dates in your date book, on your online calendar (if you use one), and on your fridge at home.

**Do the reading.** Instructors expect students to have completed the readings assigned for each class. Check to see if recommended readings are on e-reserve before you rush out and buy them. If you find you do need to purchase them, try Amazon or other online book sellers. They may also have the best prices for required texts.

**Start early.** Start research for your papers immediately. Just settling on a topic often requires a fair amount of reading. Purchase APA formatting software. Use the library online databases, especially ProQuest, Psych Info, JSTOR, Social Work Abstracts, and Expanded ASAP. Don’t be shy about asking the reference librarians for help.

**Develop expertise.** If you have an interest in a particular topic, find opportunities to learn about it through classroom assignments, term papers, or outside events. Take control of your learning and build a knowledge base.

**Ask questions.** Don’t hesitate to ask questions in class, especially if the instructions for an assignment are unclear to you. Often your classmates have the same questions, but are reluctant to ask. If you’ve asked in class and are still uncertain, approach or email your instructor. They’ll be more than happy to clarify.

**Keep copies.** Keep a copy of everything you produce: your research notes, sources, personal contacts, assignments, and papers. You may want them again even when a particular course is finished. Rubbermaid containers work well!

**Make the most of your junior service-learning experience and field practicum.** Make a good first impression, ask questions, be on time, show initiative, and work hard. Even if it’s not your dream placement, it may be a blessing in disguise. Try to meet agency staff who are outside your team or department. Tag along to meetings whenever possible and request permission to attend outside events that could enhance your experience. If you are bored, volunteer for additional responsibility. Maintain an open channel of communication with your field instructor. Notify your field liaison or classroom instructor promptly if you experience any significant problems.